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Jesuit Logic and Late Ming China

LECTURES ON THE CURSUS CONIMBRICENSIS

Edited by Cristiano Casalini

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Jesuit Logic and Late Ming China
Lectures on the *Cursus Conimbricensis*
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Foreword

It could be argued that Scholastic philosophy became a global teaching only in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when missionaries brought the Aristotelian–Thomistic corpus to the Americas and Asia. In this process of globalization, the commentaries produced by the Jesuits at the University of Coimbra played a significant role, and for the first time, Aristotle would speak not only Greek, Latin, or Arabic but also Japanese or Chinese.

Since 2014, the Archives for the Introduction of Western Learning into the East, at Sun Yat-sen University, have been collaborating with Professor Mário Carvalho and his team at the University of Coimbra, investigating the transmission of Scholasticism in China, especially through the Chinese renditions of the Coimbra commentaries. Those texts were published between 1624 and 1646, including the *Investigation of the Pattern of Names*, or *Mingli tan* (1636), by Francisco Furtado and Li Zhizhao. Thanks to the efforts of Professor Jiang Lu, a conference specifically dedicated to the transmission of logic and natural sciences in China was organized at Sun Yat-sen University in September 2017.

In this edited volume, Professor Cristiano Casalini has collected a range of chapters on Coimbran logic. Four hundred years ago, Coimbran logic had become a global teaching because it provided conceptual tools to train the rational mind, which could, at least partially, transcend the diversity of human languages and cultures. By reflecting on those endeavors of the past, we shall surely gain a better grasp of the intellectual tasks ahead of us.

—Thierry Meynard, S.J.

Archives for the Introduction of Western Learning into the East
Sun Yat-sen University

- . “Mathematics in the Jesuit *Ratio studiorum*.” In *Church, Culture & Curriculum: Theology and Mathematics in the Jesuit Ratio studiorum*, translated and edited by László Lukács, S.J., and Giuseppe Cosentino with an introduction by Frederick A. Houmann, 47–79. Philadelphia: Saint Joseph’s University Press, 1999.
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Reading Philosophy from a Dialectical Point of View: Pedro da Fonseca’s and Sebastião do Couto’s Philosophical Stance on Aristotle’s *Organon*

Mário S. de Carvalho

In memoriam Joachimi Ferreira Gomes

In the *Cursus Conimbricensis*, a set of eight volumes commenting on twenty-five titles of Aristotle’s *oeuvre* (twenty six, with Porphyry’s *Isagoge*) and published by a “team” of Portuguese Jesuit professors of philosophy of the College of Coimbra between 1592 and 1606, there is only one volume related to Aristotle’s *Organon*. As is well known, Jesuits were supposed to teach philosophy by commenting Aristotle,¹ but rather than involving simple repetition, such a task required them to adopt a philosophical stance on the commented text. In what follows, I aim to capture that stance in connection with the concept of reason or science (*ratio/scientia*).

Sebastião do Couto (1567–1639) is the author of the course’s sole volume on logic, entitled *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis S.J. in Vniversam Dialecticam Aristotelis*. This was the last of the eight titles to be published.² Nevertheless, Couto’s commentary was not the only book related to Aristotle’s *Organon*, as Pedro da Fonseca (1528–99), who was also associated with the *Cursus Conimbricensis*, had already published the *Dialectical Instructions* forty-two years earlier, in 1564. Fonseca had also published a commentary on Porphyry’s *Isagoge* (1591) one year before the commentary on *Physica* by Manuel de Góis (1543–97), the first of the eight volumes. The merit of Fonseca’s titles lies in their systematic presentation of Aristotle’s logic. This is particularly true in the case of his commentary on *Isagoge*, especially when compared with its parallel title, Couto’s *Dialectic*, which still reads the *Organon* (with the *Isagoge* by Porphyry) according to the method of the traditional commentaries (i.e., reproducing and dividing the original text and commenting on it, section by section). The same is also the case with Luis Álvares’s manuscript,³ dated as early as 1562.

1 See László Lukács, *Monumenta paedagogica Societatis Iesu* (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1965), 1:299 (hereafter *MP*).

2 For details relevant to all the Jesuit Coimbra authors studied here, as well as their Aristotelian commentaries, see the website I am currently editing with Simone Guidi: www.conimbricenses.org.

3 BGUC (General Library of the University of Coimbra), MS no. 2206. Luís Álvares was born in Lisbon, 1532, and died in Aviz (in the south of Portugal, around sixty kilometers north of Évora), on November 25, 1590, see Augustin de Backer and Aloys de Backer, *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus: Première partie; Bibliographie par les Pères Augustin*

Thus, during this period, Coimbra witnessed important philosophical contributions to logic. In the year prior to Fonseca concluding his lessons, Álvares began his own teaching course (1562–67), followed a year later by Luis de Molina in 1563–67.⁴ Due to its quality, it is likely that Molina’s extant manuscript, mostly dealing with logic, was originally intended to be included in the Coimbra course.⁵ Overall, this testifies not only to the fact that the Coimbra Jesuits paid great respect to logic, to the detriment of other philosophical disciplines, but also that the traditional method of teaching remained the most common one,⁶ despite Fonseca’s agenda of an “Aristotelian turn” (*veluti in cunabulis*) for his academy (*haec Conimbricensis Academia*).⁷ From the day of its foundation (April 14, 1547), the Jesuit College of Coimbra, and later the Royal College (1548), paid great attention to Aristotle’s *Logic*.⁸ As in Boethius’s time and his efforts to give the Greek Aristotelian logic to Latin readers, a new epoch

et Aloys de Backer; Seconde partie; Histoire par le Père Auguste Carayon, nouvelle édition par Carlos Sommervogel S.J., tome 12: Supplément par Ernest M. Rivièrre, S.J. (Leuven: Éditions de la Bibliothèque S.J, 1960), 62.

- 4 João Pereira Gomes, “Os professores de filosofia do Colégio das Artes (1555–1579),” in *Jesuítas, ciência e cultura no Portugal moderno: Obra selecta de Pe. João Pereira Gomes, S.J.*, ed. Henrique Leitão and José Eduardo Franco (Lisbon: Esfera do Caos, 2012), 248. On Luís de Molina (1535–1600), see Kirk R. MacGregor, *Luís de Molina: The Life and Theology of the Founder of the Middle Knowledge* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2015); João Rebalde, *Liberdade humana e perfeição divina na “Concordia” de Luis de Molina* (Vila Nova de Famalicão: Edições Húmus, 2015); Matthias Kaufmann and Alexander Aichele, eds., *A Companion to Luís de Molina* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).
- 5 BPE (Biblioteca Pública de Évora), MS CXVIII/1–6. On Molina’s thought on logic, mainly on his doctrine of the universals, see Helena Maria Ramos da Costa, “O inédito comentário de Luís de Molina sobre a Isagoge de Porfírio: O problema dos Universais nas Universidades portuguesas na transição do século XVI para o século XVII” (PhD diss., Porto: FLUP, 2012).
- 6 For the provincial Miguel Torres’s testimony on the importance of the teaching of logic in Coimbra in 1574, see Lukács, *MP* 4:539–41. It is remarkable that the last of the Coimbra Jesuits, Inácio Monteiro, still recommends Fonseca’s logic as an exemplary exposition (cf. Lúcio Craveiro da Silva, “Um jesuíta no contexto das Luzes: Inácio Monteiro [1724–1812],” in *História do pensamento filosófico português*, vol. 3, *As luzes*, ed. Pedro Calafate [Lisbon: Ed. Caminho, 2001], 189).
- 7 Pedro da Fonseca, *Instituições dialécticas*, praefatio (1st ed. [1564]: “Hoc autem animadvertet nostra haec Conimbricensis Academia, aliarum quarundam recentis exemplo et instituto nostro ducta, eam docendi rationem ab ipsis veluti in cunabulis sequuta est, ut in explicandis libris Aristotelis omne studium et operam collocandum existimaret” [edition used: *Instituições Dialécticas/Institutionum Dialecticarum Libri Octo*, trans. Joaquim Ferreira Gomes [Coimbra: Universidade de Coimbra, 1964], 8]; see also Diamantino Martins, “Essência do saber filosófico, segundo Pedro da Fonseca,” *Revista portuguesa de filosofia* 9 (1953): 404–5; António Manuel Martins, *Lógica e ontologia em Pedro da Fonseca* (Lisbon: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1994).
- 8 José Sebastião da Silva Dias, *A política cultural na época de D. João III* (Coimbra: Universidade de Coimbra, 1969), 624–25.

was clearly emerging, the aim of which was to provide young intellectuals, Jesuit priests and laymen, with the basic mental tools to think and dispute in harmony with a reformed Catholicism. Consequently, it is regrettable that the still extant manuscript production on logic from the Coimbra and Portuguese milieu has not yet received the attention it deserves.

Although it is easy to identify the connection between Aristotle’s *Organon* and the eight parts of the *Dialectical Instructions*, the organization of the latter should be seen as reflecting the personality and systematic approach of its author. Simplicity, clearness, and rigor characterized Fonseca’s method and goal. Arguably, Francisco Suárez’s *Disputationes metaphysicae* (1597) stands for Aristotelian metaphysics as Fonseca’s *Institutionum dialecticarum* (1564) stands for Aristotelian logic. In accordance with Fonseca’s method of combining the nature of the subject matter with its pedagogical features (*naturae et doctrinae ordo*), the first and second parts or books of the *Dialectical Instructions* deal with names and verbs. These two books are further divided into two sections on the designations of names and verbs, and on the categories; the third book deals with locution (*oratio*); several genres of locution are the object of books 4 (on division), 5 (on definition), 6, and 7 (on argumentation); and, finally, in book 8 (from chapter 19 on), Fonseca deals with the supposition and other properties related to the use of words in arguments.⁹ Because Aristotle paid special attention to the last of the three main constituents of dialectic (*disserendi modus*) that pertain to what we would call the “logic of discovery” (i.e., division, definition, and argumentation),¹⁰ Fonseca interprets Aristotle as if the Philosopher had explicitly written a treatise on argumentation (*tractatio argumentationis*).¹¹ Even though he understands dialectic, as well as its two partial objects, in a wider sense—i.e., the art of finding (*ars inveniendi*), or to look for arguments, and of judging (*ars iudicandi*), or to accommodate them in order to reach the conclusion¹²—science is always at the core of his goal and argumentation or dialectic is the structure used for its exposition. In order to solve an argument, the researcher must go through all the commonplaces (*topoi/loci*) that provide the required understanding of the subject matter being discussed¹³ and, consequently, dispose (*collocare/ponere*) of them in a way that

9 Pedro da Fonseca, *Instituições dialécticas*, 1, c. 6 A–C (Gomes, 30).

10 According to Aristotle, the procedure mentioned above as a “logic of discovery” consists in departing from known and evident things in order to arrive to what is unknown; see Fonseca, *Instituições dialécticas*, 1, c. 4 A (Gomes, 25). See also Sebastião do Couto, *Dialectica*, prooemium, q. 5, a. 3, 42.

11 Fonseca, *Instituições dialécticas*, 1, c. 5 A (Gomes, 25).

12 Fonseca, *Instituições dialécticas*, 1, c. 5 A, C, and D (Gomes, 29).

13 Fonseca, *Instituições Dialécticas*, 7, c. 11 B (Gomes, 480): “Ita patet duos et viginti esse huiusmodi locos, Definitiones scilicet, Descriptionis, Notationis, Coniugatorum, Partium Totius, Causarum, Effectorum, Antecedentium, Consequentium, Praecurrentium,

corresponds to the objective or simplest nature of that particular subject.¹⁴ In one sense, this of course amounts to nothing more than following Aristotle's, Cicero's, and Boethius's tradition of the *Topics*, but Fonseca gives his own twist to the *inventio* procedure and we may say that the "ars inveniendi" is Fonseca's "Logik der Forschung." It has been said that, when dwelling on the *Topics*, Fonseca was keeping up with his time much more than his colleague and student, Couto.¹⁵ Although this may be true, it is important to emphasize how Fonseca relates his logic of discovery to the two subdivisions of the "inventio" (i.e., synthesis [*collectio*] and analysis [*resolutio*]). In short, analysis stands for mathematics in the same way as the synthesis of the arguments (*divisio*) stands for rhetoric/dialectic.¹⁶ Even if this is Fonseca's way of approaching a systematic conception of philosophy, this is also his way of acknowledging Aristotle's admission of turning the arts of dialectic and rhetoric into coherent *technai*. In Aristotle's own words:

All men make use, more or less, of both [i.e., rhetoric and dialectic]; for to a certain extent all men attempt to discuss statements and to maintain them, to defend themselves and to attack others. Ordinary people do this either at random or through practice and from acquired habit. Both ways being possible, the subject can plainly be handled systematically, for it is possible to acquire the reason why some speakers succeed through practice and others spontaneously [...].¹⁷

Fonseca also relates the "inventio" amid the complexity of a problem with the art of achieving the simplest elements, these being taken as evident as such (*per se notae*) as well as minimum places of maximum extension. But if these are primary elements of a series formed by subordinate propositions (*praedicamentales series*),¹⁸ such a series is the backbone of argumentation and of deductive science, systematically presented or exposed.¹⁹

When Fonseca first conceived the *Cursus Conimbricensis*, he invited an eminent rhetorician, Cipriano Soares (1524–93), to participate in that huge

Comitantium, Subsequentium, Similium, Maiorum, Minorum, Parium, Dissimilium, Oppositorum, Repugnantium, Autoritates divinae et humanae."

14 Cf. Miguel B. Pereira, "Metafísica e modernidade nos caminhos do milénio," *Revista filosófica de Coimbra* 8 (1999): 40.

15 Amândio Coxito, *Estudos sobre filosofia em Portugal no século XVI* (Lisbon: INCM, 2005), 209, 219.

16 Fonseca, *Instituições dialécticas*, 5, c. 13 A (Port. trans., 322).

17 Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1, 1354a1–10 (English translation: *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation*, trans. W. Rhys Roberts, ed. Jonathan Barnes [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995], 2:2152).

18 Fonseca, *Instituições dialécticas*, 2, c. 9 C (Gomes, 114); cf. Pereira, "Metafísica," 40–41.

19 See Mário S. de Carvalho, *O curso Aristotélico jesuíta Conimbricense* (Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra, 2018).

philosophical endeavor.²⁰ Rhetoric, it must be remembered, did not pertain to the Jesuit philosophical curriculum but belonged to a previous level, the *studium humanitatis*. Although the invitation is almost contemporary to the year in which Soares was working on his famous title *De arte rhetorica*,²¹ rhetoric was not the reason why Fonseca invited him. He instead wanted Soares to deal with mathematics, astronomy, and the commentary *On the Heavens*. The invitation should consequently be interpreted as a testimony of his appreciation of Soares's teaching period in Lisbon (1553/55) in the Jesuit College of Santo Antão-o-Velho, where the sciences of the *quadrivium* were highly esteemed.²² In short, Soares was recognized by his fellow Jesuit not only as a distinguished rhetorician but as duly competent on matters related to the *quadrivium*. The invitation is easy to explain in mere pragmatic terms. Not only were the interdisciplinary skills of Jesuit teachers needed at a college but, in terms of its teaching staff, they were a priority. But inviting a rhetorician could also be seen as an admission of the wider picture in which philosophy was then being practiced and discussed.

Soares's name and his presence in the Jesuit Coimbra College are mentioned here simply to recall the obvious: entrance to the philosophy course required proficiency in grammar and rhetoric. Bearing this in mind, practicing philosophy (i.e., the actual way in which young students were introduced to philosophy and were taught to do it) involved wedding rhetoric with dialectics. Thus, while Góis situates Aristotle's *Rhetoric* immediately after the latter's *Letters* and *Poetics*,²³ Couto acknowledges that, from a didactic point of view, rhetoric should be studied after grammar and before dialectics, as was common practice.²⁴ Moreover, he also recognized that rhetoric (like grammar) has a specific kind of productivity (*efficientes*).²⁵ Indeed, as stated at the very beginning of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (1354a1): "Rhetoric is the counterpart [*antistrophos*] of dialectic."²⁶

20 See Mário S. de Carvalho, "Introdução geral," in *Comentários do Colégio Conimbricense da Companhia de Jesus sobre os três livros Da Alma de Aristóteles Estagirita*, trans. Maria da Conceição Camps (Lisbon: Edições Sílabo, 2010), 9–78.

21 Cipriano Soares, "The *De arte rhetorica* (1568) by Cyprian Soares, S.J.," trans. with introduction and notes by Lawrence Flynn (PhD diss., University of Florida, 1955); see also Belmiro Fernandes Pereira, *Retórica e eloquência em Portugal na Época do Renascimento* (Lisbon: INCM, 2012), 795–809.

22 See *Sphaera mundi: A ciência na "Aula da Esfera"*; *Manuscritos científicos do Colégio de Santo Antão nas coleções da BNP*. Comissário científico: Henrique de Sousa Leitão; coordenação técnica: Lígia de Azevedo Martins (Lisbon: Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, 2008).

23 Góis, *Physica*, prooemium, 44.

24 Sebastião do Couto, *Dialéctica*, prooemium, q. 3, a. 2, 19 (edition used: *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis e Societate Iesu, In universam Dialecticam Aristotelis Stagiritae* [Coimbra: D. G. Loureiro, 1606]).

25 Couto, *Dialéctica*, prooemium, q. 2, a. 2, 14.

26 Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, trans. Roberts, 2:2152.

The idea of a genre superior to those two subject matters could lead them to be conceived as “cross-cut” disciplines.²⁷ It is thus understandable why, at 3 p.m. on October 1, 1555, during the ceremony for attributing the Royal (or the Arts) College of Coimbra to the Society of Jesus, the important task of pronouncing the “speech on the Jesuit colleges and their method of studying” (*de Societatibus Iesu gymnasiis et de eius docendi ratione*) was given to another renowned teacher of rhetoric, Pedro Juan de Perpinyá Esclapez (1530–66).²⁸ Curiously, he was also the editor of Soarez’s *De arte rhetorica*.²⁹

From the point of view of the epistemology of the linguistic sciences (*scientiae sermocinales*), grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic are at the service of the word (*sermo*)³⁰ and, consequently, the thought (*verbum*).³¹ Once externalized (*sermo externus*),³² the word and its orientation could be viewed from the perspective of its form and capacity of moving affections,³³ and for that reason, its practice was called rhetoric or eloquence. Indeed, more than the use of arguments—greater in number when employed by rhetoricians than by dialectics³⁴—what characterizes rhetoric is its capacity to move humans or the processes used to do so, such as amplification.³⁵ But it was also inevitable to emphasize “dialectic” in the first sentence of Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, as quoted above. Indeed, “Dialectica” is the title that appears in the Coimbra volume on logic rather than the Latin word “Logica” that was chosen for the counterfeit volume, launched in Central Europe, *Collegii Conimbricensis Societatis Iesu Commentarii Doctissimi in Vniversam Logicam Aristotelis* (1604).

This is not the place to dwell on the circumstances that led to the counterfeit edition, nor to discuss the many problems that contemporary interpreters usually see in such a complex Aristotelian issue as the relationship between rhetoric and logic/dialectic.³⁶ It is a commonplace to admit that dialectic is a “pol-

lachs legomenon” (word said in many ways) in Aristotle’s lexicon, which would explain why the historical meaning of “dialectica,” from Plato on, is far from univocal and homogeneous.³⁷ Historically, the parity of the two disciplines was a customary topic at least since Boethius or Isidore of Seville and would continue to be so—Gilles of Rome, to take one example, expended more than five thousand words to comment solely on the four words in the *Aristotelis Latinus*, “rhetorica est assecutiva dialectica” (Rhetoric is the counterpart of dialectic)³⁸—up to the period in which we are interested.³⁹ Several formal discourses, commendatory at the beginning of each academic year (*orationes sapientiae*), pronounced in Coimbra, even before 1555, show how “dialectics” (or “logic”) and “rhetoric” (or “eloquence”) could easily be interchangeable.⁴⁰ The intellectual ambience in Coimbra was not only permeated by the huge presence of logic but also by an extensive interest in rhetoric, and Perpinyá testifies to Fonseca’s role in this respect.⁴¹ Since the philosophical course, the edited or standard version of which was soon to be known as the *Cursus Conimbricensis*, took place between the humanistic and the theological courses, it was impossible to ignore the issue of how to turn language and thought into something theologically and pastorally meaningful (*ad maiorem Dei gloriam*), as well the exercises to consolidate such a program. Explicitly teaching that *rhetorica affinis est ualde et similis logicae* (rhetoric is akin and very similar to logic),⁴² in his memorandum for the Jesuit leadership in Rome, Perpinyá would return to the “humanistic argument for the classic ideal of eloquence.”⁴³ When rhetoric was instituted *urbi et orbi* by the *Ratio studiorum* in 1599, Perpinyá had already forged a remarkable international teaching career—even by current standards—in some of the most important Jesuit colleges of Europe, such as Lisbon, Évora, Coimbra, Rome, Lyon, and Paris.

27 Michel Crubellier and Pierre Pellegrini, *Aristote: Le philosophe et les savoirs* (Paris: Le Seuil, 2002), 149.

28 Cf. *Petri Ioannis Perpiniani [...] orationes duodeviginti* (Rome: Zannettum et Ruffinellum, 1587), 165–209; see also Carlos Sommervogel S.J., ed., *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus* (Brussels: Oscar Schepens, 1895), 6:547–54, for other editions, see also Pereira, *Retórica e eloquência*, 774–95.

29 Peter Mack, *A History of Renaissance Rhetoric c.1380–1620* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 177; Pereira, *Retórica e eloquência*, 780.

30 Couto, *Dialectica*, prooemium, q. 2, a. 1, 13.

31 Manuel de Góis, *De anima* 3, c. 8, q. 3, a. 2, 380 (edition used: *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis Societatis Iesu, In tres libros de Anima Aristotelis Stagiritae* [Coimbra: A. Mariz, 1598]).

32 Couto, *Dialectica*, prooemium, q. 3, a. 2, 20.

33 Couto, *Dialectica*, prooemium, q. 2, a. 1, 13.

34 Fonseca, *Instituições dialécticas*, 7, c. 26 B (Gomes, 542).

35 Fonseca, *Instituições dialécticas*, 7, c. 37 C (Gomes, 596).

36 Lambros Couloubaritsis, “Dialectique, rhétorique et critique chez Aristote,” in *De la métaphysique à la rhétorique*, essais à la mémoire de Chaïm Perelman avec un inédit sur

la loquique rassemblés par Michel Meyer (Brussels: Éditions de l’Université de Bruxelles, 1986), 103–18; see also Crubellier and Pellegrini, *Aristote*, 142–49.

37 Cf. Livio Sichirollo, *La dialettica* (Milan: ISEDI, 1973).

38 Mário S. de Carvalho, *A síntese frágil: Uma introdução à filosofia (da patrística aos Conimbricenses)* (Lisbon: Edições Colibri, 2002), 174.

39 Pereira, *Retórica e eloquência*, 99ff.

40 See, e.g., António Pinto, “Oração em louvor de todas as ciências e das grandes artes: 1 de Outubro de 1555,” introdução, fixação do texto latino, tradução e notas de António Guimarães Pinto, in *Orações de Sapiência 1548–1555*, estabelecimento do texto latino, introdução, tradução e notas Maria J. Pacheco et al. (Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra), 405.

41 See Pereira, *Retórica e eloquência*, 781.

42 Cf. Peter of Perpignan’s *De arte rhetorica*, liber 1, similitudines et dissimilitudines logicae atque rhetoricae, fol. 30^v (Apud Pereira, *Retórica e eloquência*, 790, quoting from *R.P. Petri Perpignani sacerdotis Societatis Iesu, De arte rhetorica*, BAV, Barb. Lat. 1747).

43 Indeed, dialectic problems concern every kind of human being regardless of her or his position in a strict hierarchy of knowledge and sciences; see John W. O’Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 255.

Rhetoric as the Counterpart of Dialectic/Logic: The Socratic “Logos”

Anyone acquainted with the worldwide dissemination of the *Cursus Conimbricensis*, at least between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries (it knew a Chinese adaptation⁴⁴ and was a mandatory teaching manual in Catholic Polish schools⁴⁵), cannot avoid referring to its extraordinary public reception. Yet, unfortunately, it is still impossible to measure its *Wirkungsgeschichte* with objectivity, particularly in Europe. Two different situations could be recalled here. The first, the Austrian reception (Graz, 1616) of Fonseca’s *Dialectical Instructions*, entitled *Synopses in Quibus Doctrina Dialectica R.P. Petri Fonsecae ad Ordinem Aristotelicum Revocatur*, was published as an appendix by Joaquim Ferreira Gomes in the Portuguese edition of Fonseca’s work;⁴⁶ the second is the useful service that three textual places of the *Cursus Conimbricensis* gave to the young Karl Marx, in his interpretation of Aristotle’s *Physics* and *On Generation and Corruption*, during the time he was researching his PhD dissertation in Jena.⁴⁷

Since dialectic is supposed to have a private horizon and rhetoric is considered more akin to the public sphere or even politics, the diffusion of the *Cursus Conimbricensis* can be assessed, at least in part, on the basis of its rhetorical/public (missionary?) value. Here, one could have in mind Perpinyá’s words, echoing Cicero’s, according to which logic is “angustior, contractior et compressior” (more reduced, tight, and succinct) for it uses “interrogationibus breuibus et responsionibus” (brief questions and answers), whereas rhetoric is “latior, fusior, uberius, et utitur perpetua oratione” (long, developed, rich, because it recurs to full sentences).⁴⁸ Indeed, one of Descartes’s explicit criticisms of the *Cursus Conimbricensis* alluded to its prolixity,⁴⁹ which inevitably collided with the Cartesian parsimonious style. However, the public value of the *Cursus Conimbricensis* ultimately lies, at least to some extent, in the manifold layers of dialectic, recurrent in almost all its eight volumes. Consequently, the immediate aim here is to partially dislocate the traditional point of view used to interpret the course as a mere “commentary” on Aristotle’s philosophy. This requires dislocating the *Cursus Conimbricensis* from a material to a formal point of view and demands a

44 Thierry Meynard, “Aristotelian Works in Seventeenth-Century China: An Updated Survey and New Analysis,” *Monumenta serica: Journal of Oriental Studies* 65, no. 1 (2017): 67–91.

45 Serhii Wakúlenko, “Projecção da filosofia Escolástica Portuguesa na polónia Seiscentista,” *Revista filosófica de Coimbra* 15 (2006): 343–81. See also Cristiano Casalini’s introduction to this volume.

46 Cf. “Apêndice: Um Manuscrito Austríaco sobre a Lógica de Pedro da Fonseca,” in Fonseca, *Instituições dialécticas*, 779–845.

47 Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 40 (Berlin: Karl Dietz Verlag, 1968), 31, 32, 679.

48 See Pereira, *Retórica e eloquência*, 790; Cicero, *De finibus* 2.17.

49 René Descartes, *Œuvres*: “Lettre CCXX, à Mersenne, 3 décembre 1640,” in AT III, 248–52.

slightly different approach. Briefly put, since the *disputationes* are said to be the cornerstone of logic (and the *orationes populares* of rhetoric, for that matter), and since one cannot avoid recognizing the astonishing presence of the “disputatio” throughout the *Cursus Conimbricensis*,⁵⁰ it is vital to pay attention to the triad rhetoric/dialectic/logic.

In general, dialectic was said to be an “art” or a “doctrine on argumentation” (*ars sive doctrina disserendi*),⁵¹ but philosophically, from Plato on (and therefore to Aristotle), argumentation, persuasion, demonstration, opinion (*doxa*), and science (*episteme*) were very different activities. Despite also being a habit, opinion, unlike science, leads to agreement based on the terms of what is said, or of a probable reason, and should not be mistaken for fear (*formido*), faith, suspicion, or conjecture (*suspicio*).⁵² However, in the *Cursus Conimbricensis* the actual practice of philosophy is problematic in that it almost always adopts the form of a disputed problem. As such, it does not strictly or immediately point toward science.

Technically speaking, the authors of the course draw a distinction between a mere “dialectic problem” and a “dialectic proposition.” Since the former is characterized by its double interrogation and the relation between the response and the proposition that supports it, it is impossible not to recognize that hundreds of the “quaestiones” permeating the course can be identified with dialectic problems.⁵³ It would be wrong to interpret the hundreds of “question-sections” throughout the entire Coimbra course as mere formalistic or technical exercises, even in the abundant cases in which no solution is presented or probabilistic solutions are admitted.⁵⁴ Put differently: from Aristotle on, it would be easy to become sensitive to the fact that, despite the need to find truth and knowledge,

50 The word “disputatio” appears in one of the titles of the *Cursus Conimbricensis*, namely: *In libros Ethicorum Aristotelis ad Nicomachum, aliquot Conimbricensis Cursus Disputationes in quibus praecipua quaedam Ethicae disciplinae capita continentur* (Lisbon: S. Lopes, 1593); it appears too, as a literary division, in the *Tractatus de Anima separata*, in *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis Societatis Iesu, In tres libros de Anima Aristotelis Stagiritae* (Coimbra: A. Mariz, 1598), 441–536. In another book of this series, *In librum de Somniis* c. 5, in *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis Societatis Iesu In libros Aristotelis, qui Parva Naturalia appellantur* (Lisbon: S. Lopes, 1593), 44, it is said that to dispute is a distinctive mark of a philosopher.

51 Couto, *Dialectica*, prooemium, q. 4, a. 1, 22; q. 5, a. 3, 42.

52 Couto, *Dialectica* [*In libros Aristotelis Stagiritae de Posteriore Resolutione*] 1 c. 26, q. 1, a. 1, 490.

53 Couto, *Dialectica* [*In librum primum Topicorum Aristotelis Stagiritae*] c. 3, explanatio, 532, and c. 3, q. 1, a. 2 534.

54 See, e.g., *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis Societatis Iesu, In Quatuor libros de Coelo Aristotelis Stagiritae* 1, c. 2, q. 3, a. 3 (Lisbon: S. Lopes, 1593), 47 and 2, c. 5, q. 6, a. 2, 234; *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis Societatis Iesu, In duos libros De Generatione et Corruptione Aristotelis Stagiritae* 1, c. 4, q. 29, a. 3 (Coimbra: A. Mariz, 1597), 196 and 1, c. 5, q. 18, a. 2, 290.

the political and moral dimension of dialectic problems—since the answers pointing to one direction, instead of another, are given, by oneself or with someone’s aid—is inseparable from the basic practical goal of avoiding error or escaping it. Recall how Ignatius of Loyola referred to the “dangerous times” he was living in, as well as the diagnosis of Francisco Sánchez (1550–1622) that “nothing is known.”⁵⁵ Fonseca takes this into consideration when he writes that what is at stake is not simply “to prove what is known by itself, like showing the sun’s brightness in a different light; it is instead to correct man’s audacity and impertinence.”⁵⁶ His agenda recognized the importance of using dialectic to avoid falling into Lutheranism (*haeretici nostri temporis*).⁵⁷ Consequently, when dealing with the method (*ordo*) of disputing with dialectic syllogisms, Fonseca emphasizes the obligation of cautiously refuting the arguments of an opponent but without igniting any kind of hostility that could put an end to the discussion. If the opponent “perceives it,” Fonseca writes, “he or she will deny everything and prevent with brutality the pursuit of any argumentation at all”; on the contrary, he continues,

deeper and deeper questions should be made, picking up topics that seem to be more alien from the subject under discussion, and covering up, with more various demands, the core of the refutation, masking it, sometimes, with the veil of its cause, or effect, or anything else. Accordingly, the opponent, feeling reassured and occupied with matters that seem so strange, will eventually say what he or she feels, in a more sincere way, thus avoiding the voice of truth to be precluded by fear.⁵⁸

Rather than reading Fonseca’s words as if he was involved in some sort of Dale Carnegie-inspired form of leadership training, it is important to bear in mind

55 See George E. Ganss, S.J., ed. and trans., *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1992), 136; Francisco Sanches, *That Nothing Is Known (Quod nihil scitur)*, with introduction, notes, and bibliography by Elaine Limbrick, Latin text, annotations, and translation by Douglas F. S. Thomson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

56 Fonseca, *Instituições dialécticas*, 7, c. 24 H (Gomes, 616): “Hoc enim non est simpliciter probare id, quod per se notum est, et quasi luce alia clarissimum solem ostendere, sed coercere potius hominis pervicaciam, et insolentiam.”

57 Fonseca, *Instituições dialécticas*, 7, c. 42 G (Gomes, 535).

58 Fonseca, *Instituições dialécticas*, 7, c. 42 D–E (Gomes, 614–16): “Id enim ille si intellexerit, negabit omnia, aditumque argumentationi per proterviam obstruet, nec te sinet unquam manus conserere argumentando. Itaque repetendae sunt altius interrogationes, et a rebus, quae a proposito longe videntur distare, exordiendum: idque in quo tota vis refutationis posita est, interdum multitudine interrogationum obruendum, nonnunquam etiam quodam quasi pallio causae suae, aut effectus, aut rei similis, aut alicuius alterius occulendum: quo respondens securior factus est, et quasi in aliis rebus nihil ad propositum pertinentibus occupatus, syncerius dicat quod sentit, sicque veritatis vox nequaquam metu impediatur.”

Aristotle’s own words: “Rhetoric is an offshoot of dialectic and also of ethical studies,” as well as its immediate phrase: “Ethical studies may fairly be called political.”⁵⁹ It would be fair to say that all our Jesuits were thoroughly aware of these elliptic Aristotelian phrases. The absence of a commentary on *Politics* within the *Cursus Conimbricensis* can accordingly be explained by the authors’ awareness of the “political” dimensions of science, thus leading them to focus on education instead.

In fact, dialectic problems—being of a more practical (moral) or theoretical nature (natural philosophy, metaphysics, and mathematics)⁶⁰—cross all the subject matters studied by the eight volumes and twenty-six titles of the *Cursus Conimbricensis*. Indeed, dialectic problems concern every kind of human being regardless of her or his position in a strict hierarchy of knowledge and sciences. A few examples suffice. One case of a moral problem could be: “Must one obey to the parents or the law when there is a discrepancy between them?”⁶¹ Or, a problem concerning laypersons, for it divides them: “Are we to prefer wealth or honor?” Another dialectic problem, this time separating laypersons from experts (*sapientes*), could be: “Is the Sun bigger than the Earth?” Another problem, dividing the experts among them: “In an extension, are there indivisibles in act?” And finally, there are even dialectic problems that seem to anticipate the antinomies of Kant; for instance, when asked if the world is eternal or non-eternal, one is faced with a problem to which one either has a precise opinion or on which the majority of the people diverge from the opinion of the experts, or even the latter from what everybody else thinks.⁶²

The extent of the openness of this “Socratic *logos*” must not be overemphasized. It is only the recognition that, sometimes, arguments and their diverse forms of syllogisms cannot go over probabilistic domains. Some interpreters claim that a probabilistic shift characterized the “forma mentis” of the Society of Jesus,⁶³ but those are Aristotelian commonplaces as well. However, there is something new in what has been said thus far. These epistemological issues have a relation with a “sociological” dimension. In front of those learning how to do philosophy in a proper way (the students, of course), the following admission is presupposed: there are several layers of “evidence” not only according to the types of problems, as well as sciences, but also to the several kinds/conditions of humans who deal with them, depending on their proximity to truth. Couto and

59 Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1, 1356b25–26 (Rhys, 2156).

60 Fonseca, *Instituições dialécticas*, 7, c. 8 E (Gomes, 470).

61 Couto, *Dialectica*, prooemium, q. 3, a. 2, 19; Fonseca, *Instituições dialécticas* 7, c. 8 E (Gomes, 470).

62 Fonseca, *Instituições dialécticas* 7, c. 7 B (Gomes, 468); Couto, *Dialectica [In librum primum Topicorum Aristotelis Stagiritae]* §Summa eius doctrina, quam Aristotelis in reliqua huius libri parte scribit, 536; cf. I. Kant, KrV B335–36.

63 O’Malley, *First Jesuits*, 145.

Góis agree with the obvious: epistemologically, science and opinion differ and cannot occur either in the same person or at the same time.⁶⁴ Thus the best way to argue or to coherently argue (*inveniendi ac iudicandi*),⁶⁵ particularly in those cases where one may only get or produce an opinion,⁶⁶ has to take into account a “sociology of reception”: every kind of person, the majority of persons, or the more qualified of them (*sapientes*).⁶⁷ The same does not apply when seeking to “understand” (*intelligere*) complex (infinite) matters, which pertain to logic, or to “explain” (*explicare*) what the general public may understand (*intelligere*) (i.e., simple [finite] matters), which is the task of rhetoric.

Briefly commenting on *Topics*, Couto presents the usual Aristotelian section on the goals of the dialectical syllogism as follows: (1) intellectual training (*exercitationes*); (2) exchange of dignified (*honestus*) ideas (*colloquial/congressus*); and (3) all the components of the philosophical discipline.⁶⁸ There is nothing new here, of course, but after what has been said above, it is important to avoid separating those goals from what, in the following paragraph, I will call the “critical” horizon the rhetoric component dialectic also possesses. It is because goals (1) and (2) provide humans with “the ability to puzzle on both sides of a subject” that one may “detect more easily the truth and error about the several points that arise.”⁶⁹ Leaving aside fear, faith, suspicion, conjecture, and opinion, human knowledge ultimately stands or falls before truth or error. But it is thanks to the nature of the human condition that the scientific program that departs from what Aristotle taught in the *Posterior Analytics* (2, 8), as well as *Metaphysics* (1, 1), is open to each and every one of us.⁷⁰

Rhetoric and Dialectic: The Critical/Peirastiké “Logos”

Thus far, this chapter has focused on the relationship between rhetoric and dialectic. However, it is the relationship between dialectic and logic that is the

64 Manuel de Góis, *Physica* 1, c. 1, q. 2, a. 1, 62 (edition used: *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis Societatis Iesu, In Octo Libros Physicorum Aristotelis Stagiritae* [Coimbra: A. Mariz, 1592]); Sebastião do Couto, *Dialectica* [In libros Aristotelis Stagiritae de Posteriore Resolutione] 1, c. 26, explanatio, 487 and c. 26, q. 1, a. 1, 490.

65 Fonseca, *Instituições dialécticas*, 1, 2–5 (Gomes, 23–29).

66 Couto, *Dialectica* [In librum primum Topicorum Aristotelis Stagiritae], prooemium, 525; Fonseca, *Instituições dialécticas*, 7, c. 6 B (Gomes, 464).

67 Couto, *Dialectica* [In librum primum Topicorum Aristotelis Stagiritae], c. 1, explanatio, 526; and 2, 535.

68 Couto, *Dialectica* [In librum primum Topicorum Aristotelis Stagiritae], c. 1, explanatio, 526.

69 Aristotle, *Topics* 1, 2, 101a35–36; English translation: *Complete Works of Aristotle*, trans. W. A. Pickard, 1:168.

70 Cf. Mário S. de Carvalho, “Filosofia da educação Conimbricense: Sobre o ‘De magistro’ de Sebastião do Couto (no ‘Curso Aristotélico Jesuíta de Coimbra,’ 1606),” *Revista filosófica de Coimbra* 24 (2015): 161; see Fonseca, *Instituições dialécticas* 2, c. 2 B (Gomes, 97).

closest one, up to the point of both designations becoming synonymous with each other. Besides their capacity for moving emotions, all words can be viewed by their capacity for research (i.e., to make judgments, to produce syllogisms, to argue⁷¹), and hence, sometimes, the indistinct names “dialectic” or “logic.” In one way or another, all sixteenth-century Coimbra contributions to logic fall into this indistinctiveness and since, as already said, the importance of the *Organon* in the *Cursus Conimbricensis* has already been recognized, there is no need to dwell on it here.

At first sight, the author of the accurate or authorized edition of the Coimbra commentary on logic seems to prefer the word “dialectica” to refer to the study of the *Topics*, or probability, with the word “logica” being used to refer to the *Analytics*, or demonstration.⁷² But we have already alluded to the scarce interest Couto seems to display in the *Topics* when compared with Fonseca. Also, by giving his own book the title of “Dialectic,” he was following his illustrious predecessor, a scholar he particularly admired, Pedro da Fonseca. First and foremost, as a philosophical commentary, Couto’s volume belongs mostly to theoretical dialectic, a science already done and accomplished as Kant would also later recall.⁷³ It is to be noticed that practical logic (*logica utens*) distinguishes itself from its more abstract counterpart (*avulsa est a rebus*), dubbed theoretical logic (*logica docens*), due to its concreteness (*est rebus concreta*).⁷⁴ Practical logic would be the appropriate tool for the ultimate stage of what I have called the “Socratic logos.”

Be this as it may, in strictly Aristotelian terms, from the point of view of the different kinds of syllogisms used in rhetoric and in dialectic, from the perspective of the “political” side of the former discipline, and from a mere epistemological point of view, rhetoric and dialectic cannot be identified with each other. This is something that clashes with the so-called “nouvelle rhétorique.” In short, there is no hint of rhetorical devices in questions, as well as in the respective answers, such as, for example, “Whether and why ‘beginning’ is analogous?” (Fonseca⁷⁵); “How is constituted the organ of smell?” (Góis⁷⁶); or “What is the adequate object of dialectic?” (Couto⁷⁷). If all domains of research recur to obligatory commonplaces (*topoi*), these should be used differently in accordance with their specific domains.

71 Couto, *Dialectica* [In libros Categoriarum Aristotelis Stagiritae], prooemium, 229.

72 Couto, *Dialectica*, prooemium, q. 4, a. 1, 20.

73 Cf. Kant, KrV B 7.

74 Pedro da Fonseca, *Metaphysica* 2 c. 3, ss. 6–7 (edition used: *Petri Fonsecae Commentariorum In Metaphysicam Aristotelis Stagiritae Libros* [Hildesheim: G. Olms, Tomus I, 1964]); Couto, *Dialectica*, prooemium, q. 4, a. 2, 25.

75 Fonseca, *Metaphysica* 5, c. 1, q. 5, tomus 2, col. 43.

76 Góis, *De anima* 2, c. 9, q. 4, 229.

77 Couto, *Dialectica*, prooemium, q. 5, 36.

Pointing to a distinct and more precise understanding of philosophy and science (*episteme*), in what follows “critical [*peirastiké*] logos” is to be taken as the stage superseding the “Socratic logos.”

The three goals of the dialectical syllogisms already mentioned depict the world of what elsewhere Aristotle calls an “educated man,” that is, a human being having an educated mind and “able to form a fair judgement [*kritikós*] as to the goodness or badness of an exposition.”⁷⁸ The issue is that, between sophistic and philosophy, Aristotle admits that “dialectic is merely critical [*peirastiké*] where philosophy claims to know [*gnoristiké*], and sophistic is what appears to be philosophy but is not.”⁷⁹ Generally speaking, the critical dimension of dialectic seems to pertain to (educated) men or women. This is correct but should be read on the basis that everybody dedicated to research, starting with amateurs and ending with experts, steps in three layers of knowledge. This needs further examination. In the examination of any subject matter, in sophistic/rhetoric—rhetoric/dialectic—dialectic/philosophy, there is always a need for general principles.⁸⁰ But amateurs differ from dialecticians or philosophers (or scientists) in the sense that it is not the same to argue without art or possessing it⁸¹ and, thus, “only that part of the dialectic named by the Stagirite as *peirastiké* is capable of examining [*exetáxein*] problems in order to establish knowledge, through further investigation, [that is], knowledge in its proper sense.”⁸² Hence Góis’s suggestion that the word “ars” is more suitable for designating lower levels of knowledge (*populares*) while “scientia” is more suitable for higher ones.⁸³

The *Cursus Conimbricensis* was intended to give science and the reassurance of the truth to an intellectual and religious epoch diagnosed by Montaigne or Sánchez, to which Luther, Calvin, and Loyola had responded. It is interesting to note here that Brian P. Copenhaver and Charles B. Schmitt introduce the pages dedicated to the “crisis of doubt” by recalling Couillatris’s story, by Rabelais, who “out of necessity invented eloquence.”⁸⁴ To give a scientific response to the spirit of an epoch is a step further to a rhetorical one. Since we have shown elsewhere how pedagogy, according to Fonseca, sticks firmly to the conviction that each and every individual has at his or her disposal certainty and science, there is no

78 Aristotle, *Parts of Animals* 1, 639a1–10; English translation: *Complete Works of Aristotle*, trans. W. Ogle, 1:994

79 Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 4, 2, 1004a25; English translation: *Complete Works of Aristotle*, trans. W. D. Ross, 2:1586.

80 Cf. Aristotle, *Sophistical Refutations* 11, 172a21–30; Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* 1, 10–11.

81 Cf. Aristotle, *Sophistical Refutations* 11, 172a30–36.

82 Couloubaritsis, “Dialectique,” 113.

83 Manuel de Góis, *Physica*, prooemium, q. 3, a. 2, 26–27. Differently, confronting “scientia” with “sapientia,” however, Fonseca says that the former is used by laymen (cf. his *Meta-physica* 1, c. 1, explanatio, 38).

84 Brian P. Copenhaver and Charles B. Schmitt, *A History of Western Philosophy*, vol. 3, *Renaissance Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 239.

need to go any further into this here.⁸⁵ Taking sides in a dispute about the literary situation of the *Topics* (between the *Prior* and the *Posterior Analytics*), Couto keeps to the tradition of reading the *Topics* after the two *Analytics*.⁸⁶ This order should translate the idea already referred to earlier, namely that argumentation is at the service of science and that the way science is exposed in the whole of the *Cursus Conimbricensis* is the most appropriate one.

Given the dual (although sometimes seen as unique) regulatory nature of the “logos” of the science taught—for one side, as a way of consolidating the identity of one science, per se, and, for another, as a dogmatic or theological conditioner⁸⁷—when students leave the humanistic course and enter into the philosophical one, they are stepping into a territory with epistemological constraints. If we here take “dogmatic” in its Kantian use, “critical” is being used in its already mentioned Aristotelian meaning. The scientific practice students and teachers were stepping in was not only leading them closer to the queen of the sciences, theology, but was imposing on them a stricter practice of philosophy. This explains why, periodically, an inquiry on what was being read was made and the Aristotelian rule known as “μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος” (i.e., the passing from one genus to another)⁸⁸ was taken seriously.

Without explicitly mentioning the “metábasis” issue, when tackling the essential form of the arguments (*ex forma essentiali*) and its role in claiming for “all art and faculty [...] a certain and determined matter,” Fonseca’s openness toward the role of the rhetorician leaves no doubts (a marginal note reads: “Latissimus hic aperitur campus Dialectico” [a very wide field to the dialectician is here opened]). Let us paraphrase his words. He begins by blaming

the rhetorician who, abolishing any kind of beauty from his speech, wishes to weed it of mathematical reasons or pure philosophy [...]. From the same defect, Fonseca goes on, will be accused mathematicians and philosophers who deal with mathematical and philosophical matters using an eloquent style, namely, recurring to the embellishments of figure and rhythms. *Here the dialectician may himself largely expand*: he will prevent the grammarian from daring to reach the meanings of theology; he will respectfully admonish the theologian not to demean to questions unworthy of a so great science; he will exhort the intermediate sciences to confine to their limits. And he will not warn only the other disciplines; he will also warn himself in order

85 See supra, note 70.

86 Couto, *Dialectica* [In libros Aristotelis Stagiritae de Posteriore Resolutione], prooemium, 286; and [In libros Aristotelis Stagiritae de Priore Resolutione], prooemium, 173.

87 See Paul Richard Blum, “L’enseignement de la métaphysique dans les Collèges jésuites d’Allemagne au XVIIe siècle,” in *Les jésuites à la Renaissance: Système éducatif et production du savoir*, ed. Luce Giard (Paris: PUF, 1995), 93–105.

88 Cf. Aristotle, *An. Prior.* 1, 7, 75a38; Aristotle, *De caelo* 1, 1, 268ff.

to suppress many sophisms, to put away useless and unnecessary matters, he will leave metaphysical questions to whom may deal with them. If however, *due to the affinity with metaphysics*, he feels the need to say something related to metaphysics, he will do it briefly without discussing it as metaphysicians do it, but in his own way, the dialectic one.⁸⁹

If we are to remember that Fonseca admits that: (1) there is a universal “dialectica,”⁹⁰ the source of the most problematic matters (*ex probabilibus*), he is now saying that (2) each particular science has its own way and field of research, independent of “dialectica”; but he also adds (3) that there is a practice (*more dialectico*) with the duty of controlling/admonishing all experts in their own expertise; finally, he recognizes (4) the existence of affinities between dialectic and metaphysics. One cannot avoid losing sight of the crux that connects items (2) and (4). In between “autonomy” and “hierarchy,” “critical” and “dogmatic” procedures, we should read this long quotation as an echo of the following passage of the *Rhetoric*:

The better the selection one makes of propositions suitable for special commonplaces the nearer one comes, unconsciously, to setting up one science that is distinct from dialectic and rhetoric. One may succeed in stating the required principles, but one’s science will be no longer dialectic or rhetoric, but the science to which the principles thus discovered belong.⁹¹

Whereas item (2) seems to contradict the title I have given to this chapter, items (3) and (4) clearly do not. “Reading philosophy (and all its components, being they practical or theoretical) from a dialectical point of view,” should not mean only that every layer of science needs argumentation. This would be the weaker

89 Fonseca, *Instituições dialécticas*, 7, c. 20 C (Gomes, 514): “Hinc accusabitur Orator, qui omni ornatu praeciso, ex mathematicis rationibus, aut ex intima Philosophia depromptis orationem contexere voluerit: parisque vitii coarguentur Mathematici, ac Philosophi, qui non, nisi more oratorio, hoc est figurarum, ac modorum phaleris de rebus mathematicis, et philosophicis disseruerint. Latissime hic poterit expatiari Dialecticus, Cohibebit Grammaticum ne Theologiae sensus audeat attingere: Theologorum submisce admonebit ne ad quaestiones, quae tanta professione indignae sunt, sese demittat: mediasque scientias, si quando finibus suis excesserint, ut pedem referant adhortabitur. Nec modo alias disciplinas commonebit, sed etiam in seipsum animadvertet: multa sophismata rescabit: inutilia, quaeque in usum non veniunt, contemnet: demum quaestiones metaphysicas suis autoribus relinquet, Si quando propter affinitatem, quam habet cum Metaphysico, aliquid de rebus metaphysicis dicere necesse habuerit, id quasi praeteriens faciet, nec more metaphysico, sed dialectico, id est suo, ea discutiet. Haec omnia argumenta ex forma essentiali ducuntur quandoquidem omnis ars, omnis facultas, et officium (quae sunt essentialia formae artificium, et eorum qui munus aliquod gerunt, [quatenus eiusmodi sunt]) certam aliquam, et praescriptam materiam sibi vendicant.”

90 Fonseca, *Metaphysica* 2, c. 3, s. 6, c. 499.

91 Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1, 1358a22–26 (Roberts, 2159).

version of our problem here, and thus incapable of providing us with the stance we have been looking for from the very beginning. In the following paragraph, it will be seen that, first and foremost, the chapter’s title implies that human reason is intrinsically dialectic for it cannot be disconnected from the universal appetite for science.

Dialectic/Philosophy/Science: The Universal “Logos”

The Coimbra exposition of science is deductively conceived. This exposition is truly distinct from the Aristotelian conception in its ontological/anthropological, rather than epistemological, perspective, for it is related to the concept of human reason. It is thus important to conclude the chapter by dwelling on “ratio,” and this cannot be done without recalling the Jesuits’ teaching concerning the first well-known phrase of Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*, “all men by nature desire to know [*scire*]” (980a22).⁹²

According to Couto, “ratio” may refer to the faculty of thought in its discursive dimension,⁹³ or to the art or science previous to every kind of science.⁹⁴ One could immediately see here an allusion to an enigmatic Aristotelian passage of the *Topics* in which the Philosopher, after referring to the already known three functions that pertain to dialectic, adds a fourth “in relation to the principles used in the several sciences. For it is impossible to discuss them at all—he continues—from the principles proper to the particular science in hand, seeing that the principles are primitive in relation to everything else [...]”⁹⁵ This could indeed be the case, because it could be interpreted as the knowledge our mind (*mens*) exhibits in arts and sciences. Furthermore, it is also related to the doctrine of science and the role the “praecognita” has in it.⁹⁶ But there is something more here that is less Aristotelian, because, as we shall see, it is also here that the inner characteristic of the human mind is at stake, namely the nobility revealed by the human intelligence (*intelligentia*) whenever it can attain God, for human “ratio”—as Góis insists—is precisely a sketch of God’s image.⁹⁷ It is in sticking to Augustine’s and Bonaventure’s tradition that Fonseca, as well as Couto, read Aristotle here. Our Jesuits adhere to Aristotle’s doctrine of the causes but add to it the exemplar cause, and they did so while recognizing the place attributed to humans in the world, according to Pseudo-Dionysius’s ontological hierarchical chain.⁹⁸

92 Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1, 1, 980a22 (Ross, 1552); Fonseca, *Metaphysica* 1, c. 1, cc. 38–72.

93 Couto, *Dialectica* [*In libros Aristotelis Stagiritae de Posteriore Resolutione*], 1, c. 1, q. 1, a. 4, 300.

94 Couto, *Dialectica*, prooemium, q. 1, a. 1, 8.

95 Aristotle, *Topics* 1, 2, 101a36–37 (Pickard, 168).

96 See Cristiano Casalini, *Aristotele a Coimbra: Il Corso Conimbricensis e l’educazione nel Collegium Artium* (Rome: Anicia, 2012), 137ff.

97 Couto, *Dialectica*, prooemium, q. 1, a. 1, 7.

98 See Carvalho, *O Curso Aristotélico*, passim.

Touching upon the different use of a word in philosophical or popular discourse, that is, again in dialectic terms,⁹⁹ Góis eventually teaches how we are supposed to interpret the Aristotelian phrase of the *Topics* 101a36 quoted above (i.e., grasping the ultimate essence of knowledge). Dwelling on the meaning of “intelligere” within the new context of “ratio,” it will be taught (paraphrasing Góis’s text) that one thinks for one is a creature, and human intellection (or thought) takes place under the light of the first truth. This happens—he goes on—not by reason of the thing known but *by the notion of the knowledge itself*; or, in other words, not as if one knows the first truth, but because *nothing falls under one’s intellect unless it is illuminated by the first truth*, thus participating in the divine and sacred light that derives from the divine fountain.¹⁰⁰ If Couto and Góis, each in his own way, provide us with the ontological version of this true point of departure, Fonseca also emphasizes its epistemological (and “engaged”¹⁰¹) version. When he discusses the very first phrase of *Metaphysics*, Cicero suddenly comes back. Perhaps this is the right moment to mention that Cicero’s contribution to rhetoric in Coimbra has recently been emphasized to the detriment of Aristotle’s.¹⁰² Committed to the goal of criticizing all sorts of probabilistic or skeptical philosophical doctrines, the superior knowledge that science (*sapientia*) attains, Fonseca teaches, is the very horizon of the natural desire common to all intelligent beings (*sapientiae nomine appellatur, esse hominibus maxime naturalem*).¹⁰³ This cannot be read without having in mind all that has already been said in relation with the political or public scope of the *Cursus Conimbricensis*. Fonseca goes on to explain that perfectly knowing (*perfecte cognoscendi*) the ultimate theoretical science is equivalent to having certain and evident knowledge (*certam et evidentem notitia*). This degree of knowledge can be obtained by a definitive or demonstrative procedure, the latter attained either by the knowledge of the principles or the conclusions (*notitia principiorum/conclusionum*),¹⁰⁴ both of which originate in an inherent, and deliberated, appetite (*appetitu innato, sed etiam elicitio*) for sound science.¹⁰⁵ Explaining and materially describing how we are supposed to attain science, starting from the senses,¹⁰⁶ and, therefore, recognizing the impor-

99 Góis, *Physica* 1, c. 9, q. 6, a. 4, 184.

100 Góis, *Physica* 1, c. 1, q. 5, a. 3, p. 87: “Ea quae intelligimus, non dici [...] percipi a nobis in luce primae veritatis tanquam in re cognita, sed tanquam in ratione cognoscendi, id est, non quasi dum quidpiam intelligimus ipsam primam veritatem prius cognoscamus, sed quia nihil in nostrum intellectum cadit, nisi quatenus in eo prima veritas elucet.”

101 Cf. Fonseca, *Metaphysica*, proemium, 1, c. 4, col. 24, and also c. 5, col. 30. See also note 71 above.

102 Pereira, *Retórica e eloquência*, 783.

103 Fonseca, *Metaphysica* 1, c. 1, explanatio, 38.

104 Fonseca, *Metaphysica* 1, c. 1, explanatio, 38.

105 Fonseca, *Metaphysica* 1, c. 1, q. 1, s. 6, cc. 65–69.

106 Fonseca, *Metaphysica* 1, c. 1, q. 3, s. 2, cc. 83–84.

tance of experience, as well as arts and sciences¹⁰⁷—thus giving the epistemological version of what I have previously described as dialectic, and their layers, in a context that aims at praising “our innate love of learning and of knowledge, that no one can doubt that man’s nature is strongly attracted to [it]”¹⁰⁸—Fonseca finds himself stuck in rhetoric. But if this is unimportant, at least the reader cannot avoid being struck by the unusually long and beautifully written quotation of Cicero’s *De finibus* (5, 18–19),¹⁰⁹ where it is claimed that “we are forced to infer that the objects of study and knowledge contain in themselves the allurements that entice us to study and to learning.”¹¹⁰ In Cicero’s own words, quoted at length by Fonseca, the idea that “the mind feels delight [...] and finds enjoyment in the mere possession of knowledge,”¹¹¹ more than partaking of the Stoic ethical purpose of “alleviation of misfortune” (as in Cicero’s), is a eulogy on ontological and theological contemplation for science’s own sake (*ipsius scientiae causa*).¹¹² Humans strive to rationality, they know for the sake of the object known rather than for their own sake. Or better still, it is the close relationship between both actors that matters (i.e., knowledge in itself).

The final relevance of knowledge for its own sake would have been eroded, in those early modern times so sensitive to the place of humans in the world—*de hominis dignitate*, in Giovanni Pico della Mirandola’s *Oration*—if the necessary link between ratio and truth was not attained. The Jesuits and their educational program is a proof of faith that that was already attained and that dialectic was suitable to display it. Until now, that connection has not been duly considered, as well as its contribution to a shift from the object known to the knowledge itself. But the new European proclivity to the problem was also attained due to those authors who chose to read philosophy from a dialectical point of view.

107 Fonseca, *Metaphysica* 1, c. 1, q. 4, s. 3, cc. 92–96.

108 Fonseca, *Metaphysica* 1, c. 1, q. 1, s. 6, c. 67: “Tantum est innatus in omnibus cognitionis amor et scientiae, ut nemo dubitare possit, quin ad eas res hominum natura nullo emolumento invitata rapiatur [...]”; see Cicero, *De finibus* 5, 18, 48; ed. Loeb Classical Library, 1931, vol. 17, reproduced at: http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cicero/de_Finibus/5*.html (accessed July 2, 2019).

109 Fonseca, *Metaphysica* 1, c. 1, q. 1, s. 6, cc. 67–68.

110 Fonseca, *Metaphysica* 1, c. 1, q. 1, s. 6, c. 68: “Quocirca intelligi inesse est in ipsis rebus, quae discuntur et cognoscuntur, invitamenta inesse, quibus ad discendum, cognoscendumque moveamur”; see Cicero, *De finibus* 5, 19, 52; at: http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cicero/de_Finibus/5*.html (accessed July 2, 2019).

111 Cicero, *De finibus* 5, 19, 50; http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cicero/de_Finibus/5*.html (accessed July 2, 2019).

112 Fonseca, *Metaphysica* 1, c. 1, q. 1, s. 6, c. 66.

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